

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) System for enabling the cancellation of a previously-sent e-mail, comprising:

a data transmission network, wherein a plurality of users are connected to said network, each of said users being able as a sender to send an e-mail over said network to a plurality of users as recipients connected to said network, and wherein a message transfer agent (MTA) is associated with each of said users for sending the e-mail when said user acts as a sender and delivering the e-mail when said user acts as a recipient,

wherein each MTA includes a cancel mailbox for transmitting a cancellation message to said recipients when the user associated with said MTA is a sender wanting to cancel a previously-sent e-mail ~~[[or] and~~ for managing the cancellation of e-mails in the mailbox of the user associated with said MTA upon receiving said cancellation message from said sender when this user is a recipient,

wherein the cancel mailbox of each MTA ~~is configured to cancel~~ the e-mail sent to the recipients only when none of the recipients has read the e-mail, and ~~is configured to delete~~ the e-mail when any of said recipients has read said e-mail,

an intermediate MTA, different than the MTA associated with the sender and the MTA associated with any of the recipients, and responsible for a specific domain name or for a distribution list, between the MTA associated with the sender and the MTA associated with any of the recipients, the intermediate MTA including a cancel mailbox different than the cancel mailbox of the MTA associated with the sender and the cancel mailbox of the MTA associated with any of the recipients, the cancel mailbox of the intermediate MTA receiving the cancellation message from the MTA associated with the

sender and, in response, transmitting the cancellation message to the MTA associated with each recipient.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Original) System according to claim 1, wherein the cancel mailbox in each said MTA is associated with a cancellation agent for managing the cancellation of said e-mail, said cancellation agent building a delete process table giving a status of said e-mail during the cancellation process managed by said cancellation agent.

4. (Currently Amended) Process for canceling a previously-sent e-mail in a system comprising a data transmission network, wherein a plurality of users are connected to said network, each of said users being able as a sender to forward an e-mail over said network to a plurality of users as recipients connected to said network, and wherein a message transfer agent (MTA) is associated with each of said users for sending the e-mail when said user acts as a sender and delivering the e-mail when said user acts as a recipient;

said process comprising:

a) sending from said sender a message for deleting said e-mail to a cancel mailbox included in said sender MTA,

b) sending from said cancel mailbox included in the sender MTA a message to a cancel mailbox included in each MTA respectively associated with the recipients being

addressed in said e-mail in order to inform the recipients that said e-mail has to be deleted if it is not yet read,

c) sending from said cancel mailboxes of said MTAs respectively associated with said recipients a message requesting that said e-mail has to be masked only if it has not yet been read, and

d) deleting said masked e-mail only when none of said recipients has read said e-mail, and not deleting the masked e-mail when any of said recipients has read said e-mail;

wherein there is an intermediate MTA, different than the MTA associated with the sender and the MTA associated with any of the recipients, and responsible for a specific domain name or for a distribution list, between the MTA associated with the sender and the MTA associated with any of the recipients, the intermediate MTA including a cancel mailbox different than the cancel mailbox of the MTA associated with the sender and the cancel mailbox of the MTA associated with any of the recipients, wherein step b) further includes receiving, at the cancel mailbox of the intermediate MTA, the cancellation message from the MTA associated with the sender and, in response, transmitting the cancellation message to the MTA associated with each recipient.

5. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 4, wherein a cancel mailbox of a MTA associated with each recipient sends back via the intermediate MTA an acknowledgement message of a first type if said recipient has not yet read said e-mail.

6. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 5, wherein the cancel mailbox of the MTA associated with several recipients sends back via the intermediate MTA a first type message to said sender MTA if none of these recipients has already read said e-mail.

7. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 6, wherein said step d) comprises sending from the cancel mailbox of said sender MTA a message via the intermediate MTA to the cancel mailboxes of the MTAs associated with all the recipients addressed in said e-mail requesting each cancel mailbox to delete said e-mail.

8. (Original) Process according to claim 7, wherein said step d) further comprises the step of sending a message from said cancel mailboxes of the MTAs associated with all recipients to the recipient mailboxes in order to delete said e-mail.

9. (Original) Process according to claim 7, wherein the cancel mailbox of said sender MTA sends a first type acknowledgment message to the mailbox of said sender to confirm that said e-mail has been deleted.

10. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 4, wherein a cancel mailbox of a MTA associated with a recipient sends back via the intermediate MTA an acknowledgment message of a second type if said recipient has already read said e-mail.

11. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 10, wherein the cancel mailbox of the MTA associated with several recipients sends back via the intermediate MTA a second type message to said sender MTA if at least one of these recipients has already read said e-mail.

12. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 11, wherein said step d) comprises sending from the cancel mailbox of said sender MTA a message via the intermediate MTA to the cancel mailboxes of the MTAs associated with the recipients who have not yet read said e-mail requesting not to delete said e-mail.

13. (Original) Process according to claim 12, wherein said step d) further comprises the step of sending a message from said cancel mailboxes of the MTAs associated with the recipients who have not yet read said e-mail to the mailboxes of said recipients in order not to delete said e-mail.

14. (Original) Process according to claim 12, wherein the cancel mailbox of said sender MTA sends a second type acknowledgment message to the mailbox of said sender to confirm that said e-mail has not been deleted.

15. (Cancelled).

16. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim [[15]] 4, wherein at least one of said recipients is addressed by an alias, the cancel mailbox of the MTA receiving said

alias being adapted to send a request to an associated domain name server (DNS) in order to obtain the address corresponding to said alias.